

Tackling the Disability Employment Gap

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Overview of Specialist Employment Service

- Supporting 720 people with disabilities and/or disadvantages per year into work opportunities. Referrals from social workers, day centres and self referral for those who meet Care Act criteria.
- Supporting over 300 people at any one time into employment opportunities including paid employment and apprenticeships



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Supported Employment in action



Aim for clients referred

The Specialist Employment Service supports vulnerable people with disabilities to have the same chance to gain and sustain employment as non-disabled people.

We do this by providing the correct professional help and support so that both the employer and employee have a positive experience of employment.



What are the figures?

Work with over 270 new clients per year

68% clients into paid employment- 58% over 16 hours, 42% under 16 hours

98% sustaining paid employment 26 weeks or more-

Age profile of clients

Up to date age profiles for 2017-2018

- 16-24 – 55%
- 25+ - 45%

Previously 70% over 25

The 12 Core Values of Supported Employment

Supported employment practitioners embrace the philosophy that;

1. People with disabilities and/or disadvantages can make a positive contribution in the workplace.
2. People with disabilities/disadvantages should have access to a real job where;
 - Wages are paid at the going rate for the job.
 - The employee enjoys the same terms and conditions as all other employees.
 - The job helps the person to meet their life goals and aspirations.
 - The role is valued by managers and colleagues.
 - The job has similar hours and times at work as other employees, with safe working conditions
3. Practitioners uphold the “zero rejection” philosophy of supported employment so that, with the right job and the right support, everyone who wants to work, can work.
4. Supported employment does not adhere to a work readiness model and a ‘place, train and maintain’ approach is implemented.
5. Job search should happen at the earliest opportunity.

The 12 Core Values of Supported Employment (continued)

6. People are encouraged to exercise choice and control in achieving their career aspirations. Support is individualised and all options assume successful employability.
7. There is a genuine partnership between the person, their family carers, employers, community supports and the provider of supported employment.
8. People are supported to be full and active members of their workforces and wider communities, both socially and economically.
9. Support services recognise the importance of the employer as a customer of supported employment in their own right with requirements that need to be satisfied.
10. Supported employment draws on Social Role Valorisation (SRV) in recognising that employment is a valued social role and becoming employed can help reverse societal devaluation, with wider positive consequences for the person.
11. Supported employment draws on the social model of disability recognising that disability is the product of the physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers present within society. The removal of discrimination requires a change of approach and thinking in the way in which society is organised, in this case removing barriers to employment.
12. Supported employment should encourage the career development of individuals by promoting training opportunities and seeking options for increased responsibility.

5 Stages of Supported Employment

1

Customer engagement

Many potential jobseekers are using traditional day services or receiving support from health and social care agencies. Others may be isolated at home or in danger of exploitation. People leave education every year with the hope of finding employment. In the past, professionals and families have had low expectations of people with disabilities finding sustainable work. It is important that expectations of employment are raised across health and social care services. The co-location of staff is particularly useful to achieve this.

2

Vocational Profiling

This is a "getting to know you" process where we identify the aspirations, learning needs, individual skills, former experiences and job preferences of the participant. The profile informs the practical job finding and makes it more likely that we find a high quality job match. Many people have never worked or not worked for many years and will need support to make informed choices about career opportunities.

3

Employer engagement

Close engagement with employers helps them to overcome traditional recruitment and selection barriers. We know that traditional recruitment techniques can be overly rigid and formal interviews seldom result in offers of employment. Employers are increasingly recognising the value of "working interviews" which allow individuals to demonstrate their skills in the workplace.

'Employment and Training' rather than 'Training then Employment'.

4

Job Matching

Once we secure employer commitment, a job analysis is usually undertaken. This checks out any assumptions made in the job description and thoroughly investigates the job on offer so that we can describe all its aspects and those of the work place, including health and safety. The job analysis might point towards ways of carving together parts of job descriptions that suit the workers' talents, or creating new job descriptions that suit the worker and are cost effective for the employer.

5

In-work Support

Support is individually tailored and targeted where it is needed most ensuring a cost effective use of resources. It is important to offer appropriate levels of support and encourage the involvement of the employer and co-workers Individual goals are agreed and recorded on a development plan.

Supported Employment Quality Framework- BASE

base

British Association for
Supported Employment

- Leadership
- Strategy
- Human Resources
- Partnerships and Resources
- Products, Services and Processes
- Customer results
- People results
- Society results
- Business results

SEQF results from BASE



- Kent Supported Employment scored 100% on the 2 day audit
- Highest score of any company assessed in the country
- Recognised as a national leader in Supported Employment and providing support to other agencies and authorities
- Voted as Chair of the South East England BASE region
- Team of the Year 2018
- Practitioner of the Year 2018

base

British Association for
Supported Employment

How have we engaged with partners and employers?

- Open and honest conversations re the client, their talents, their barriers, their benefits to the business
- Over 400 employers on 'our books'
- Clear expectations from the outset
- Dedicated Employer Engagement staff member and processes
- We have employers on the shelf- not jobs
- Valued staff member - not doing anyone a 'favour'

Challenges faced and key points of learning for employers

- Employers fearful of not knowing how to deal with a person with disabilities
- Employers concerned around making sure they were supported once the person was in place
- Ensuring a robust process was in place with clear expectations on all sides, the employer, the client and supported employment staff

Work with employers

Find employers suitable for supported internships and paid work- more links between employers and schools

Disability Awareness Training-

Consultancy for employing staff with disabilities e.g. NHS 5 year pledge, Highways England

Teaching employers how to 'job carve'

Engaging with recruitment agencies as part of their social responsibilities- working in partnership to source paid work

Job Coach training for employees to support staff in the workplace

Key impacts

- Clients with additional needs gaining quality employment
- Clients progressing into careers
- Employers valuing all staff for being 'the best they can be'
- A more diverse workforce, that employers can access
- A world where people with disabilities feel part of and add value to society- recognised for their strengths and skills

Making
employers feel
valued



Case Study

- Sarah- Now working full time in the NHS- Administrative Assistant with LD

Quote:

“When I went to primary school in Dartford I was told I had a mental handicap. I was sent to a boarding school with lots of other children who were all disabled. Now I realise I am a person, just like anybody else, I have a real job”

Contact

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